

Town of Northport
Climate Resilience Committee
 Minutes of **May 1**, 2024 meeting

NEXT MEETING: June 5

PRESENT: Susan Conard, Gordon Fuller, Celine Bewsher, John Krueger, Molly Schaufler, James Kossuth, Tinsley Morrison

AGENDA:

- Approve 3/20 minutes
Approved with no changes
- Update on recent other climate-related meetings: Susan, John, Tinsley
 - Going forward, can we schedule our meetings for the first Wednesday of the month?
Yes.
 - Waldo County Hazard Mitigation: list of hazards to include in our plan
*Tinsley gave a summary of the Waldo County Haz Mit mtg that she attended. A summary of hazards that Northport wants to plan for are: **storm surge/sea-level rise, wind and rain storms and associated flooding.***
*Celine added that we need to include **shoreline stabilization** (and has updates)*

Celine and James had learned through MCOG that Northport is not going to be a priority for grants for funding our stabilization work because other places are experiencing so much more loss of shoreline, so our best bet is going to be through FEMA, once our county Haz Mit plan is completed.

Susan mentioned that someone mentioned to her that they have a lot of rock that they want to get rid of and would beat market price, this may be something useful for our seawall efforts.

*Molly added hazards to include: **power loss, internet loss, people who are vulnerable without a connection to information***

*Susan added **flooding, ice** (more frequent icing events), **trees** (coming down and falling branches)*

James learned that when wires come down (in the middle of the night), CMP showed up right away, but Consolidated (cable/internet) was not interested in showing up till the following day, fixing their customer's

service is not a priority for them.

Celine brought up that this is a case in point of why community engagement is so important for us, and the question of how do we get information to people in a timely manner? *How do we create engagement through all pockets of Northport? Perhaps through print, occasional mailing.*

Molly asked if we need to give the bottom line hazard results to FEMA at the next meeting, and does James have what he needs for that? James replied that our June 12 community workshop meeting is going to be after the FEMA meeting, so he would proceed with what we have, which is the previous survey results as well as select board minutes. Molly asks if we can get John (the new intern) to *set up another online survey?* Tinsley mentioned that the survey can also live on our website, collecting data, for as long as we want.

Tinsley asked James if he has what he needs for the FEMA mtg or needs anything else from us? James said that since he missed the first few minutes of the meeting, he missed the first part of our list. We recapped the list: Storm surge (sea-level rise), strong storm wind and rain, loss of power, loss of internet, ice, trees and branches falling, flooding, drainage, vulnerable people, inland storm water management, shoreline stabilization.

Molly asked if we were going to have an update on energy efficiency happenings, but Tinsley hadn't put it on the agenda because she thought we were going to focus on community meeting planning.

- "NCRC task board" updates
 - Molly populated the grants tab! [Check it out!](#)
- **Engage Northport Residents**
 - Let's plan the June 12@ 6:00 to 8:00 pm **Community Resilience Engagement Meeting**
 - **Where: book facility**
 - **What: develop agenda**

Celine said that we should start with an update, letting the residents know what happened as a result of the last meeting and survey, which includes the shoreline stabilization engineering study, the current repairs on Shore rd., the fact that we have the study but not the funds to carry out the work, that we are trying to find funding to go ahead with construction, to share the engineering plans,

As a sidebar, Celine reported that from her last meeting with MCOG, she learned that Northport will not be a priority for grants and that our best chance at funding is through FEMA/hazard mitigation planning. Also possible Climate Resiliency grants, which are best toward engineering studies.

Continuing with the meeting agenda, next we should break out into groups and work through a new survey with the residents.

Sidebar: Molly asked the difference between the hazard mitigation plan and a climate resilience plan. Celine described the two types of funding, and mentioned that there is another round of climate resilience funding to apply for in the fall, which might be used toward an engineering study for our storm drainage issues. Tinsley stated that she learned that the FEMA funding is quite hard to get, and that you have to spend the money first and then be reimbursed sometime later by FEMA. Celine explained that we have to have capital planning in place to be able to show matching funds, and or spend as needed to be reimbursed. Susan asked what has happened to the funding that we had been talking about earlier that we were supposed to apply for by June? Celine answered that that was the Land and Water Conservation (State and Federal 1,000,000) fund which she and James had been working on. We had made it through the preauthorization phase ok, then after a couple more meetings, learned that the nature of the grant was to be used for public access spaces. James worked to show them that yes, we can show (with some considerable effort) that Auditorium and Ruggles parks are public access. The next requirement is that we'd have to spend 50% of the money on recreational access. So we included the dock, which qualified. But the final hurdle is that we'd have to show the matching funds, ready to go. In fact, most of the grants have the same requirement, except for the 50K Climate Resilience grant. We simply do not have the matching funds to show them.

A discussion followed about the different types of federal funding available for which we do not qualify.

Molly asked about a Capital Fund Campaign, what does that look like for us? What is it for? Just shoreline stabilization? Is it building up matching funds for grants that will contribute to climate resilience? Celine explained that she thinks we need to look at a 10 year plan, sharing the vision with the town, that shows a ten year series of engineering studies and construction phases, with

the capital planning geared to match funds to support at least the next three years of climate resilience project costs. James confirmed that yes, we will have to spend a lot in order to get reimbursed.

Molly asked how this will relate to the new town hall capital funding effort? James replied that it is probably best to keep them as separate campaigns.

After more discussion of why we don't qualify for much federal funding, Celine made a point that it would be good to communicate in our community outreach communication: the federal funding criteria is derived from census data, and we are lumped in with Lincolnville and Ilseboro, so our income numbers are heavily skewed by that. Clarifying this could help diffuse resentment within Northport.

Molly suggested that we have another meeting just for the workshop planning. We agreed.

Tinsley wants to print the map that she has been working on and have it available for people to investigate and mark up.

Gordon brought up that it's important to spread the information widely, including residents who will not attend. We will have the survey live on the town website, James will put a link in the newsletter, and we will ask Dan Webster to send it out in his emails. Tinsley asked if we should have the workshop on Zoom but it was decided that, no, we should not.

John asked if we can have a summary description of the meeting. Celine said yes, we would have (and did last time too) an objective summary of the meeting that would go out with the invitation. Much of what we want to say here can be taken from the letter that we put in the town report. Gordon said he would like to have a chance to proofread it for comprehension. Celine said that it is important that we all reach out to our friends and neighbors personally too.

Next we discussed where to host the event. First we thought of the Community Hall and the fire station, but eventually landed on the elementary school as a final location with ample parking and a neutral community vibe. James will book the school for June 12, 6:00 pm to 8:00.

Tinsley summarized the meeting plan so far: 1st an update, engineering study, what's being done, why we don't have the funds for next phases,

what we learned from the previous survey, then breaking out into groups to begin to build the 10 year plan of climate resilience work as prioritized by residents. Susan says we must include context at the beginning, and we agree that yes, as part of the initial update there will be history/context provided. Then breakout groups and a report back.

We should all try to at least attend the workshop, and act as facilitators if we are able to. Gordon observed that at the previous workshop, it felt a little disconnected and some people were domineering while others were disinterested. He suggests smaller groups. We want people to talk through and discuss the surveys. Molly says we can pare down the survey. Celine pointed out that we, as facilitators, can help take control of the discussion, keeping folks from dominating and moving the discussion along. Celine had an idea that it would be good to go around the tables and ask for individual perspectives. We agree that the survey, as a form of engagement, should go out ahead of the meeting.

John said that, regarding getting people to show up, he thinks getting a good letter out to everyone, building some excitement would be helpful. Susan underlined the point that whatever goes out needs to clearly invite/involve ALL Northport residents, not just the Bayside/shore people. John said it should feel like a real invitation with some good graphics. Celine said that a poster could go out via the school, sent home in backpacks, as well as being posted in various public locations in town. Tinsley asked if we could do a postcard mailing. Molly said we can, and we all agree this is a plan. Celine said the message needs to be "BE HEARD, BE INVOLVED, CLIMATE RESILIENCE!" Tinsley said she can crank out postcards, and posters quickly. The postcards should go out on June 1, and posters home in school backpacks the last week of school. James estimates there are 850 or so addresses to mail to.

We decide that we do need to have food, as a draw and to create a sense of community. Pizza is the winner.

We set the date for the follow up workshop planning meeting. We eventually landed on Thursday, May 23, at 5:30 at the town office.

- **Energy Efficiency update**

Molly reported that she talked with George Callas, the energy auditor, who was very helpful. He estimated 1 to 3 thousand dollars for the town accounts. If we want to proceed, we can schedule a site visit where he will see what we want assessed. Bayside? School? After the initial site visit, he will submit a proposal. We won't be able to say whether we have a budget for this or not till after the town votes on the budget at the annual

town meeting, June 17. We agree to proceed with initiating at least the site visit for now. Which buildings would make sense to look at? Molly handed out a summary of accounts. (The current town office will be replaced, but it makes sense to audit it anyway, for comparison) The school, the town office, the fire houses (x2), street lights (the NVC streetlights are a huge expense, not LED, a relatively easy fix for a large savings - this is a question for the village to decide—as well as deciding if they want the community hall building to be evaluated) The salt/sand garage isn't on the list because of its nature, there isn't much we could do.

John Clifford can hopefully keep working on the assessment spreadsheet, including square footages, current usage data, and oil costs.

James and Molly will talk with the school to see if they are on board for the assessment. Celine or Gordon will follow up with the NVC/Bill to make sure they are as well.

Gordon mentioned that LED streetlights may be a sensitive subject, especially down around the dock, as they are not pleasant to look at. John said that different spectrums are available now, which could make them less objectionable. Celine wants to know the cost of conversion to LED so that the overseer board can have that information.

- **Create a task list** for John Clifford, the Northport intern who is starting at the end of May
 - Help Tinsley with website

Tinsley has a thumbnail plan for the website, but will wait till the workshop is behind us to go over that. We can definitely use John's help with pulling the website together. We will need some writing done.
 - Help with map & tagging photos of vulnerable areas

- **Website:** update on site structure and need for some writing, beginning with our Mission Statement.

Molly handed out copies of a piece she wrote called "Get to know your carbon footprint" about calculating and understanding carbon footprint. This could be very good for our website. We need to read critically and see if it's current and applicable as community outreach/education.

- **Homework!** Choose something to work on and report about at the next meeting :)

Tinsley is making postcards and flyers.

Gordon is going to start picking up and posting the monthly newsletter (first week of June)

Celine will take the posters from Tinsley and pass them out.

Susan will copy edit.

Molly reminded us that Saturday, May 4 is town clean up day!

- **Schedule the next meeting**

First Wednesday of June is the 5th. Does that work?

Yes, plus a workshop planning meeting for May 23.